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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who makes the crooked places straight, continue to guide our lawmakers as they seek to walk with wisdom and integrity. May they embrace Your wisdom, which is pure, gentle, considerate, merciful, productive, peaceful, and sincere.

Lord, lead them on a path of integrity that strives to keep a clear conscience before You and humanity. Inspired by Your unconditional love, empower our Senators to achieve a faithfulness that will cause people to glorify Your Name. Provide our legislators with the courage to turn from evil as You do for them more than they can ask or imagine.

We pray in Your righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, after today, there will be no doubt which party is working to solve the problems in our country and which party is accelerating us toward an unnecessary, avoidable disaster.

Let me say that again without interruption.

Madam President, after today, there will be no doubt—no doubt—about which party in this Chamber is working to solve the problems that face our country and which party is accelerating us toward unnecessary, avoidable disaster.

At the end of last week, I filed cloture on proceeding to the continuing resolution sent to us by the House of Representatives, which, among other things, would prevent a government shutdown and suspend the debt limit so we can pay for our debts incurred during the previous administration.

In a few hours, we will vote on cloture on a motion to proceed to this bill. The Democrats will do the responsible thing, the right thing, and the thing that has been done for decades by both parties and vote yes.

Now, if Republicans follow through with their plans to vote no, they will be on record deliberately sabotaging our country's ability to pay the bills and likely causing the first ever default in American history. The consequences of a default would be, in the words of Secretary Yellen, "catastrophic."

The best case scenario is—the best case under this awful situation is—that our country would fall into another recession, potentially erasing all the progress we have made to pull ourselves out of the COVID crisis. That is if we are lucky. Otherwise, one anal-

ysis warned that default could hurt Americans for generations—for generations. Interest costs would be higher and not go down very quickly, and that has huge effects on so many different people, and that is only one of the effects of default.

So I want my Republican colleagues to think carefully about the practical consequences of what they are doing. A default means, quite simply, the government cannot pay its bills. It means that suddenly the government is presented with unimaginable options. Do they tell seniors they won't get their Social Security checks, or veterans that they won't see their benefits, or tell our military that they won't be getting paid?

And the consequences on Main Street would be equally severe. A default would very likely send markets crashing and interest rates skyrocketing, making it harder for small businesses to make ends meet, for homeowners and renters to pay the bills, and for consumers to keep our economy going.

All of the consequences—or so many of the consequences—can be boiled down into three frightening numbers: 6 million, 9, \$15 trillion—6 million jobs lost, 9 percent unemployment, \$15 trillion in squandered household wealth. Let me say that again. Those are devastating numbers on so many households throughout America, just about every household. That is 6 million jobs lost, 9 percent unemployment, \$15 trillion in squandered household wealth.

Yes, that is what we are potentially looking at if Republicans get their irresponsible and reckless way. None of this needs to happen—none of it. The only reason we are here and the only reason this is even a possibility is because Republicans are making this a possibility by preventing the government from paying its bills. It is an unhinged position to take, one that not long ago only the most radical elements of the Republican Party would have embraced.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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